



# THE TRUST

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 13 : December 2014

## Please support our 2014 Christmas Toy and Food Appeal.

Once again, as the build up to festive period begins, the Trust Board would like to announce it's now annual Christmas Toy (& food) Appeal to help benefit those within the local community who find themselves in a less fortunate position than us at this time of year.

As always, we are appealing to your good nature and asking for donations of toys (new only please) which will be handed out to the children on the Children's Ward of Walsall Manor Hospital prior to Christmas Day, and also for non-perishable food items which will be donated to the Walsall Food Bank near to junction 10 in order to allow many families across the borough to enjoy their Christmas too.



Board Trustee Mikee Evans and Treasurer Margaret Vardy join Swifty during The 2013 Christmas Toy (& Food) Appeal at the Banks's Stadium.

The collection will be held at the Banks's Stadium on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December when the Saddlers take on Barnsley in their Sky Bet League 1 fixture.

Please look out for the Trust Gazebo situated near to the main entrance which will once again be manned by Board Trustee Mikee Evans and Trust Treasurer Margaret Vardy (pictured above). A collection bucket will also be available for any loose change you may want to donate which will then be used to purchase further items for our appeal.

**Claim up to £30 in Co-op vouchers when you switch to Co-operative Energy.**



The Trust have teamed up with Walsall based energy suppliers Co-operative Energy to bring you not only the most competitive energy prices on the market, but also the chance to claim up to £30 in Co-operative Vouchers to spend on whatever you like in store, as well as raising £25 for the Walsall Football Supporters' Trust.

This acts as a carry on from our previous partnership with Co-operative Energy and Supporters' Direct, but offers something back to you, a deal which is currently only available to Walsall FC Supporters and one other organisation.

You will be entitled to claim a FREE £5 co-op voucher for simply getting an energy quote from Co-operative Energy, followed by a further £25 in vouchers absolutely FREE if you then decide to switch your dual fuel energy supply to the Co-operative Energy dual fuel tariff (£12.50 if you only take out either single Gas or Electrical energy).

What's more, for everyone of you who switch to Co-operative energy, the Trust will also receive £25, money which will go a long way to helping with the running costs of the Trust, and towards our nominated charities and/or worthy causes.

Details are yet to be finalised; so please look out for further information as it becomes available.

# Decline in Membership Numbers a major concern for the Trust Board.

Despite numerous notices going out via email to our current members, previous newsletters, and both our Walsall FC Matchday Programme and Walsall Advertiser media columns, a dramatic decline in this seasons Membership for the Trust has left the Board a little disheartened to say the very least and has raised concerns as to how to boost numbers once again.

The number of current paid up annual members (including Business Members) is way lower than that recorded throughout both the 2012/13 and 2013/14 seasons and is now also lower than the total number of Life Members already on our database in relation to membership levels offered by previous Boards of the Trust.

This is understandably a worry for the Trust Board who continues to carry out its voluntary duties on a daily basis regardless.

The Walsall Football Supporters' Trust is still amongst the cheapest Supporter Trusts in the top four tiers of English Football with membership starting at just £2 for a whole season, a fee which not only secures your paid up share in the Trust itself, but also goes towards our annual fees to both Supporters Direct and the Financial Conduct Authority, the governing bodies of such organisations as ours.

Similar organisations do offer a level of free membership, but this avenue does not entitle said members to either an equal share in the organisation, or the right to vote, stand for election or question the Boards activities etc. We are however looking into ways to make membership to the Trust more accessible to all.

If you are yet to renew your membership for the remainder of the 2014/15 season, we please ask that you do it at your earliest convenience to enable us to update our records in the Members Register before the beginning of the new year. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website at [www.walsallfctrust.org.uk](http://www.walsallfctrust.org.uk) or can be obtained from a member of the Trust Board. If you have never been a member of the Trust and would like to join or like to find out more information first, then please visit our website for details.

Finally, if you have any concerns, queries, or questions regarding the Trust, the way in which its run, or the current Board, please feel free to contact us via email to [walsall1888@aol.com](mailto:walsall1888@aol.com) so as to enable us discuss things openly with you and if needs be, put the things we're doing wrong right.

We are an accepted representative of the fans of Walsall FC by the club itself and are here to help you raise any concerns regarding the club, though how much longer that acceptance by the club lasts without your support is a question which needs investigating in great depth.

It was once put to the Board that a Trust will only come into its own when its club is in crisis and its supporters need them most.... Our aim is to be in a position to help stop such a crisis from occurring in the first place, something we can only do with your ongoing and future support.

## Walsall FC 2014 Annual General Meeting.

The 2014 Walsall FC Annual General Meeting is to be held in the Priory Lounge at the Banks's Stadium on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 9:00am.

This will be the 92<sup>nd</sup> AGM of the Club which is held in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 2006, and will be attended by a representative(s) of the Trust.

As the Trust Board have received no questions on behalf of its members by the cut off date (Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December), no questions will be put to the club by the Trust on this occasion.

## Update regarding the Trust Website.

It is with regret that we are still unable to announce the re-publication of the Trust Website at this current time.

Although we can assure you that work is still on going with the site and that an end is now in sight, we are still unable to give an exact date as to when the site will be live.

There have been a number of issues with the rebuild of the site which is being created using more up to date software which should cause less problems in the long term, however, a PC hack following an online scam, other commitments, family life and a number of health issues have meant that our Webmaster has not been able to devote as much time to the site, which he builds and maintains in his own time as he would have liked to.

We will keep you informed as to progress with the site as and when we can, but in the mean time, please visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/walsallfctrust](http://www.facebook.com/groups/walsallfctrust), or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/walsalltrust](http://www.twitter.com/walsalltrust) for all the latest news and updates.

Thank you for your patience and support regarding this matter.

# FA Cup Run Squad of 74/75 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion at The Saddlers Club.

The Walsall Football Supporters' Trust, in association with the Walsall Football Supporters' Club, are to hold a special event which will see as many of the 1974/75 FA Cup run squad who defeated both Manchester United 3-2 and Newcastle United 1-0 before losing at the hands of Birmingham City in the fifth round proper in attendance at what aims to be a very memorable night.

Details are yet to be finalised, but it is hoped that the event will be staged as near to the date of that glorious match v Newcastle as possible with Walsall's Sky Bet league 1 home clash with Gillingham at the Banks's Stadium on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January at the forefront of our minds.

Further information will be posted on our Facebook page, via Twitter and in both of our media columns in the Walsall FC Matchday Programme and Walsall Advertiser as and when they become available.

## The Professional Footballers Association (PFA) reaches out to Former Players Association.

The Professional Footballers Association (PFA) has contacted the Trust via Walsall Football Club in an attempt to establish contact with the Walsall FC Former Players Associations in order to re-establish contact with its members who will also be PFA Members.

Over the years, the contact information that the PFA has held on its members has become outdated meaning that contact has been lost.

Would any members of the Walsall FC Former Players Association who wish to re-establish contact with the PFA in order to update their contact information, please contact Trust / Former Players Association Secretary Steve Davies at [walsall1888@aol.com](mailto:walsall1888@aol.com) in order to grant permission for your details to be passed on, allowing the PFA to provide members with the support and benefits they are still entitled to.

Additionally, the PFA are looking to conduct a number of studies in the near future that may be of interest to some of the WFC FPA members and may also offer the opportunity for some members to participate in said studies should they wish to do so.

Your assistance with this matter would be very beneficial and gratefully appreciated by the Professional Footballers Association.

## Research into 'Risk of Osteoarthritis in Professional Footballers'.

The Department of Academic Rheumatology at the University of Nottingham have recently contacted the Trust regarding its current research into the risk of Osteoarthritis in Professional Footballers.

The study team wish to work with a number of football clubs across the country to determine the risk of Knee Osteoarthritis in later life caused by playing as a professional footballer at an earlier age.

The project which is funded by Arthritis Research UK, with funding and additional support from FIFA, the FA, the PFA and Spire Healthcare is undertaking a survey of all retired professional footballers in the United Kingdom and subsequently undertaking knee x-rays on a sample of questionnaire responders.

The study is hoping to send the questionnaire to as many retired professional footballers as possible who are above the age of 40 and who have previously held a full time contract with a professional football club including Walsall FC.

Any former players who fit the criteria listed above, and who would like to take part in this study should contact Trust / Former Players Association Secretary Steve Davies at [walsall1888@aol.com](mailto:walsall1888@aol.com) for more information and to register your interest.

## For more information...

Visit the Trust Facebook page at:-

[www.facebook.com/groups/walsallfctrust](http://www.facebook.com/groups/walsallfctrust)

follow us on twitter at:-

[www.twitter.com/walsalltrust](http://www.twitter.com/walsalltrust).

Or read our column in the Walsall FC Matchday Programme.